

ENTOMOLOGICAL ITEMS.

Rovartani lapok, the Hungarian entomological journal edited by Dr. Géza Horváth, and published at Budapest, ceased to appear with the numero for December 1885, after two years of existence.

PROF. LEWIS R. GIBBES, of Charleston, S. C., reports receiving a specimen of *Heliconia charithonia* from Beaufort, N. C., in 1885. This is the northernmost point at which it has been found. It is rare at Wilmington Island, near Savannah, Georgia, according to Dr. A. Oemler. It is more common at St. Simons Island and Port Royal, S. C., but it is not a common butterfly north of Florida.

PRESERVATION OF LIVING COLONIES OF TERMES LUCIFUGUS.—Dr. G. Horváth, in an article in the numero of *Rovartani lapok* for October, 1885, on the discovery of *Termes lucifugus* in Hungary, states that Lespès, who studied very carefully the anatomy of these insects, was unable to keep living colonies for two months. Horváth, on the other hand, has succeeded in keeping colonies alive for two years, by taking pains to sprinkle the nests each day with a few drops of water.

ENTOMOLOGY IN GEOGRAPHY AND LITERATURE.—Among late contributions to the connection of literature and entomology are two short papers in *Rovartani lapok* for September and October 1885, respectively. The first is a paper by Géza Horváth on the part which the Hungarian names of insects have played in giving names to towns, villages, and farms in Hungary. There are more than a hundred such names. The second is a paper, by Béla Chyzer, "On *coccinellidae* in the infantile poetry of Hungary," in which eight examples are given of children's verses in which the lady-bugs are mentioned.

CHEMICALLY-PRODUCED VARIETIES OF COLEOPTERA.—Mr. Albert Bergé states (Comptendu Soc. entom. Belg., for Nov. 1885), that he has been able to produce all

the numerous color-varieties of *Carabus auronitens* by chemical means. He does not enter into details of his processes, as he states that he is intending to prepare a more extensive work on the subject, including in it all the coleoptera; but he makes the general statement that alkalies and acids produce colors varying from brown through red to yellow, and that calcic chloride and heat produce all the tints from green to violet. Mr. Bergé does not claim that these varieties are caused in nature in the same way in which he has produced them.

PROF. K. LINDEMAN, in an article entitled, "Die am getreide lebenden thrips-arten Mitteleusslands" (Bull. Soc. impér. natur. Mosc., 1886, v. 62, p. 296-337) gives an extended illustrated account of the life-history of *thrips secalina* and *phloeothrips frumentaria*, which do extensive injury to grain in Russia, and adds notes on *thrips antennata*, *t. rufa*, and *phloeothrips armata*, which also live on grain. Injury is caused to grain in two ways by thrips. First the larvae, in large numbers, pierce the ear before it has made its appearance, to such an extent that they cause the death of the tip of the ear. When the ears have further developed both larvae and full-grown thrips pierce the young seed-buds, causing death to the blossoms, and, consequently, poorly-filled heads.

SWARMING OF APHIDES AT PETERBOROUGH, ENGLAND.—*The entomologist* (Oct. 1885, v. 18, p. 267-268) quotes the following from the *Stamford and Rutland guardian* for 14 August, 1885:—Abundance of aphides at Peterborough. — On Thursday, the central streets of the town were rendered impassible with any amount of comfort, owing to the air being thickly laden with myriads of green flies, in some parts almost resembling a mist. The town air seemed in the long-run to upset them, for they were late in the day to be seen covering the ground to nearly an inch in depth. The Corn Exchange had just been re-painted, and acted as an admirable fly-

catcher, causing some amount of amusement to all except the contractor, who was compelled to pumice-stone their corpses off to make the place presentable.

FUNGI PARASITIC ON INSECTS.—The *Journal of mycology* for March 1886 contains a brief sketch of the life of Lewis David von Schweinitz, based on a sketch read before the Academy of natural sciences of Philadelphia, 12 May 1835, by R. Walter Johnson. Schweinitz was a Pennsylvanian botanist, who was born in 1780 and died in 1834. Amongst other systematic work on cryptogams he published descriptions of the fungi parasitic on insects, his being the first described species of these fungi from America. The same numero of the *Journal* contains the beginning of a "Synopsis of the North American *hypocreaceae*, with descriptions of the species," by J. B. Ellis and B. M. Everhart. This family of fungi includes the genus *Cordyceps*, some of the species of which are parasitic on insects, causing the phenomena known as "vegetating larvae."

INSECTS AS AUTHORS OF EPIDEMICS.—Dr. R. L. Maddox, in a paper read before the Royal microscopical society, details the results of further experiments in feeding insects, especially the common blow-fly, on the comma bacillus. His observations include a large number of microscopical determinations. The results of all his investigations lead him to believe that the comma bacillus from cultures can pass in a living state through the digestive tubes of some insects, and, through this fact, that such insects are likely to become an important means of distributing disease, especially to animals that feed upon them. This is in accordance with the views of Dr. Grossi, that "insects, especially flies, may be considered as veritable authors of epidemics and agents in infectious maladies." — *Sci. american*, 18 Dec., 1886.

MIGRATION OF INSECTS. — A proposition has been made in Ceylon for the systematic observation of the singular migration of butterflies in that island. Despite occasional references in the local press, nothing has yet been done towards compiling and editing a scientific and comprehensive record of annual observations. It is proposed, therefore, that volunteers should watch for the migration, and send a post-card bulletin to the editor of records, noticing date, direction of flight, direction of wind, the weather, and the species. For the last purpose, amateur observers are to send one specimen of each species noticed, in order to ensure scientific accuracy. A competent naturalist is stated to have offered to revise, assort, and edit all such notices once or twice a year, and publish a periodical report of progress. The annual summary will appear in the 'Taprobanian magazine.' — *Entomologist*, May 1886. v. 19 p. 140.

ANOTHER NUISANCE. — A copy of *The insect world*, a popular paper published by its editor, Noble M. Eberhart, at Chicago Lawn, Ill., has come to our notice. Like a number of journals purporting to deal popularly with scientific subjects, this one abounds with typographical errors and careless statements, but, as if to atone for other shortcomings, it has departments devoted to geology and mineralogy, ornithology, and archaeology. The journal is a monthly, of inconvenient form (31×22 cm.), and fills no want in scientific literature. The following quotation from a paper by the editor, entitled, "Among the insects" will sufficiently show the scientific and literary value of this new entomological journal.

"FORFICULIDÆ.—This family contains the Earwigs. Common superstition is that they enter the human ears; but this is absurd, as the excretions of the ear would kill the insect."

How long since was the ear discovered to be an *excretory* organ? G: D.